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OO RUEHCHI RUEHDT RUEHHM
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FM AMEMBASSY MANILA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4128
INFO RUEHZS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS IMMEDIATE
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA IMMEDIATE 9486
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO IMMEDIATE 2986
RHHMUNA/CDRUSPACOM HONOLULU HI IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RHHMUNS/COMSOPAC HONOLULU HI IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 004861

SIPDIS

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STATE FOR EAP, PM, S/CT, AND EAP/MTS
USPACOM ALSO FOR FPA HUSO AND J5
SECDEF/OSD/ISA/AP (TOOLAN/BAILEY)
JOINT STAFF/J5 (WILKES/ROBINSON/CLEMMONS)

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (CLASSIFICATION CORRECTION PARA 2)

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/30/2016
TAGS: [PTER](#) [MARR](#) [MASS](#) [MOPS](#) [MCAP](#) [PREL](#) [RP](#)
SUBJECT: NOVEMBER 30 UPDATE ON JOLO OPERATIONS

REF: MANILA 4508 AND PREVIOUS

Classified By: (U) Pol/C Scott Bellard
for reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

¶1. (C/REL AUS) The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) is now ending its 18th week of operations against the Abu Sayyaf and Jemaah Islamiyah leadership on the southern Mindanao island of Jolo. It has suffered 22 killed and 103 wounded since the August 1 onset of "Operation Ultimatum," and shows no sign of letting up. AFP Chief of Staff General Esperon has told his troops that if they want to come home for Christmas, they have to get the high value targets, who the AFP continues to believe are on the eastern half of Jolo.

¶2. (C/REL AUS) According to AFP sources, Sheng Janjalani, Khadaffy Janjalani's wife, arrived on Jolo November 28 from Basilan in an effort to learn more about her husband's fate. The AFP hopes by following Sheng to confirm or deny persistent rumors suggesting that the ASG leader was wounded or killed in a mid-September encounter with government troops.

¶3. (C/REL AUS) Lieutenant General Cedo established a new command on Jolo, the Joint Special Operations Force (JSOF), effective November 25, that brings Light Reaction Company, Scout Ranger, Special Operations, and Naval Special Warfare units under a unified commander, Brigadier General Pabustan. Cedo's objective is to use Army and Marine troops as fixing and blocking forces and the JSOF as the assault and finishing element.

¶4. (C/REL AUS) Following this reorganization, the AFP kicked off an operation in southeastern Jolo in the region of Talipao using the Philippine Army's 33rd and 35th Infantry Battalions as blocking forces, and the 4th and 6th Special Forces Companies to clear the area in which the AFP believes Dulmatin and Abu Sulaiman are hiding. The AFP is planning a more ambitious operation, Operational Directive 18, which is based a predictive analysis of past ASG/JI actions and thorough intelligence preparation of the battlefield. This type of intelligence-driven planning demonstrates growing sophistication (with U.S. help) in AFP operations.

¶5. (C/REL AUS) The Philippine Navy maritime cordon around Jolo continues to operate, backed up by U.S. intelligence,

surveillance, and reconnaissance support, and has so far conducted 3,886 maritime interdictions.

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